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YMBC Lunch Breaks Up Following Verbal Battle

Talk on JFK Murder Causes Confusion

By JOE MASSA

A luncheon of the Young Men's Business Club of Greater New Orleans ended in confusion Wednesday at the Roosevelt Hotel following a verbal battle between author Mark Lane and an official of the Information Council of the Americas.

The oral sparring took place shortly after Lane completed a speech to the group in which he sharply criticized the findings of the Warren Commission Report of the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Lane is the author of the best-seller "Rush to Judgment."

At the end of Lane's address, YMBC board member Francis Richardson stood up and introduced a motion for the YMBC to go on record in favor of a full disclosure and release by the United States government of all pertinent information and data relating to the assassination of President Kennedy and that this information be released to any competent investigators.

PROTESTS ENSUE

The action brought howls of protest from the luncheon audience and triggered a reaction by Edward S. Butler, executive director of INCA and a luncheon guest. Butler stood up at his table and asked for equal time to answer Lane's allegations about inaccuracies in the Warren Report.

Butler's backers cheered, but his request was turned down because it reportedly was out of order.

Butler then fired questions at Lane, sitting several feet away at the head table. The questions were drowned out in a sea of arguing voices of supporters on each side.

After some order was restored, Lane went to the microphone again and addressed himself to Butler. The author told Butler he is a believer in democracy and can not see why the federal government is deliberately hiding the truth about President Kennedy's assassination from the American people.

MOVE SQUELCHED

Butler then interrupted to say he, too, is a believer in democracy who seeks the truth. He made his way to the head table, apparently to set a debate in motion between himself and Lane, but behind-the-scenes maneuvering by YMBC officials squelched the move.

INCA is a non-profit organization in New Orleans, whose purpose is to distribute anti-Communist materials throughout Latin America.

YMBC secretary Laurence Lagarde took over the microphone and asked for an oral vote on Richardson's resolution. The motion was turned down with a chorus of "No's" from the audience.

Then, a member claimed that the entire resolution was out-of-order in the first place and should not have been voted on.

OUT-OF-ORDER

A few minutes later, Lagarde announced that the motion was indeed out-of-order since the by-laws state that all motions, except emergency ones, must be submitted to the board of directors before the general membership.

Butler followed Lagarde to the microphone and apologized for what he called his rude behavior on the floor earlier. "I had no intention of bursting out like I did and I apologize for my rudeness," he stated.

Butler turned to Lane and challenged him to a debate at a later time. There was no response from Lane.

Lagarde moved in at this point and adjourned the luncheon amid rumblings from the gathering.

During Lane's speech, he challenged the federal government to hear testimony of a former United States Secret Service agent who claims the agency knew of a plot to kill President Kennedy before his assassination.

He indentified the agent as Abraham W. Bolden, who is now imprisoned in Springfield, Mo. Lane charged that Bolden was sent to prison after being refused permission to tell the Warren Commission about the alleged information.

Lane said the Secret Service knew an attempt would be made on Kennedy's life during a visit to Chicago. The visit was subsequently canceled.

NAME NOT DISCLOSED

One of several names given the federal agency then, Lane asserted, was one of a man now being sought by District Attorney Jim Garrison in his probe of the Kennedy assassination. He did not disclose the man's name.

Bolden was sentenced in Chicago two years ago to six years in prison for conspiring to sell official information in a counterfeiting case.

Lane maintained Bolden was put in prison because he might have revealed governmental secrets concerning the truth about Kennedy's assassination.

Another key witness, Darrell Wayne Garner of Dallas, also was never called to testify before the Warren Commission, Lane said, although Garner claims to know of a link between Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby. Oswald was named by the Warren Commission as the President's assassin. Ruby was the Dallas night club operator who shot Oswald to death two days after the President's assassination.